

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Status of Claims***

1. Claims 1 and 12 are amended in view of applicant's response filed 8 March 2011. Claims 3, 5-6, 9, 14 and 17 are canceled. Therefore, claims 1-2, 4, 7-8, 10-13, 15-16 and 18-20 are currently under examination.

### ***Status of Previous Rejections***

2. All previous rejections are withdrawn in view of applicant's claim amendments filed 8 March 2011.

### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

3. Claims 1-2, 4, 7-8, 10-13, 15-16 and 18-20 are allowed.

4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Prior art of record does not teach or fairly suggest, either alone or in combination, the claimed controlled cobalt removal in a zinc preparation process during which cobalt removal is performed in at least two reactors connected in series and having a connecting pipe in between and an outlet pipe from the second reactor, wherein redox potential, whose measuring instruments are purified at predetermined intervals, and acidity and/or basicity, measured by a BT value, are measured at the claimed locations and the measurement results are used to adjust the process variables of the cobalt removal, and the acidity and/or basicity are measured by a BT value, wherein introduction of zinc powder is adjusted to provide a BT value of about 1.0 to 3.0.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

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accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LOIS ZHENG whose telephone number is (571)272-1248. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00am - 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King can be reached on (571) 272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/ Roy King/  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art  
Unit 1733

LLZ